

## Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01

TRSE-00 EB-08 COME-00 ACDA-12 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 /082 W

-----093182 051223Z /23

O R 051115Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9398

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 8148

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: COALITION STABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS -- ERBAKAN

REVERTS TO FORM

REF: ANKARA 7477 (071530Z OCT 77)

1. SUMMARY: EARLIER SIGNS OF COOPERATION WITHIN THE  
COALITION HAVE ALL BUT DISAPPEARED. NATIONAL SALVATION  
PARTY (NSP) LEADER ERBAKAN AGAIN SEEMS TO BE THE PRIMARY  
SOURCE OF DIFFICULTY. THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING  
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HIS LATEST EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY  
HAS GIVEN RISE TO RUMORS THAT COALITION IS ABOUT TO  
FALL. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE COALITION IN IMMEDIATE  
DANGER OF COLLAPSING BUT THE BREAKDOWN IN COOPERATION  
HAS REDUCED ITS CAPACITY TO GOVERN EFFECTIVELY. THIS  
IN TURN WILL AGGRAVATE DEMIREL'S ALREADY DIFFICULT TASK  
OF KEEPING HIS JUSTICE PARTY (JP) UNITED BEHIND HIM

AND IN THE COALITION. A MAJOR JP SETBACK IN THE DECEMBER 11 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS COULD SERIOUSLY WEAKEN DEMIREL'S POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. THE HOPEFUL SIGNS OF COALITION COOPERATION AND COURAGE WE OBSERVED DURING THE FIRST 60 DAYS OF DEMIREL'S COALITION HAVE ALL BUT DISAPPEARED DURING THE PAST MONTH. THE COALITION PARTNERS HAVE REVERTED TO THEIR PRE-ELECTION HABIT OF PUBLICLY COMPLAINING ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE OF THE OTHERS. INTRA-COALITION DISAGREEMENTS ON PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS AND POLICY PRIORITIES SEEM TO HAVE MADE EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE. THE PRIMARY CULPRIT, NOW AS THEN, APPEARS TO BE NSP LEADER ERBAKAN, WHO IS SINGLE-MINDED IN HIS PURSUIT OF NARROW NSP GOALS AND INTERESTS. THE MOST NOTEWORTHY RECENT EXAMPLE OF ERBAKAN'S OBSESSION IS HIS PARTISAN DRIVE TO ESTABLISH AN AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY IN TURKEY (ANKARA 8031).

3. TO MOST OUTSIDE OBSERVERS, THE IDEA OF CREATING A MILITARY JET AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING CAPABILITY IN TURKEY IS IRRATIONAL. MOST TURKS WOULD NOT AGREE. IN FACT, EGJBAKAN HAS RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR THE GENERAL IDEA. ERBAKAN'S SUPPORT HAS BEEN UNDERMINED AND HIS PARTY ISOLATED, HOWEVER, BY THE RECENT DECISION OF THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (NSP DEPUTY CONFIDENTIAL

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AGUZHAN ASILTURK) TO SELECT THE AERMACCHI MB-339 AIRCRAFT--A DECISION APPARENTLY TAKEN WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF, AND PERHAPS CONTRARY TO THE SPECIFIC DESIRES OF, THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF AND THE AIR FORCE.

4. THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THIS EPISODE IS NOT YET CLEAR. PUBLIC CONTRACT SIGNING CEREMONIES WERE TWICE POSTPONED LAST WEEK. THEREFORE, THE PUBLIC IMPRESSION IS THAT ERBAKAN HAS LOST THE FIRST ROUND AND OZBE THE FIGHT. (THE AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD BY HIS ITALIWKF COLLEAGUE NOVEMBER 3, HOWEVER, THAT ERBAKAN HAD ASSURED HIM THAT THE CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED AND WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC SOON).

5. ANKARA AND THE TURKISH PRESS HAVE BEEN FULL OF RUMORS ABOUT THE EFFECT OF ERBAKAN'S LATEST ANTICS ON THE FUTURE OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. SOME OBSERVERS SEEM TO FEEL THE CONTINUATION OF THE COALITION HAS BEEN CALLED INTO DOUBT BY ERBAKAN'S BRINKMANSHIP. WE DO NOT THINK SO. IF THE AERMACCHI CONTRACT HAS IN FACT BEEN SIGNED, ERBAKAN AND THE NSP MAY WELL HAVE OVERSTEPPED THEMSELVES, AND A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ERBAKAN AND THE MILITARY COULD

OCCUR. WE THINK IT MORE LIKELY HOWEVER THAT EVEN UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES DEMIREL WOULD TRY TO KEEP THE COALITION TOGETHER AND A WAY WOULD PROBABLY BE FOUND TO INVALIDATE THE CONTRACT.

6. IF THE CONTRACT HAS NOT BEEN SIGNED, WE BELIEVE WHATEVER THREAT WAS PRESENTED TO THE COALITION BY THIS EPISODE HAS PASSED. ERBAKAN HAS BLUSTERED AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, BUT HE HAS NOT THREATENED TO LEAVE THE COALITION. WE REMAIN CONVINCED THAT ERBAKAN SEES HIS POLITICAL INTERESTS BEST SERVED BY REMAINING IN POWER AND THAT REGARDLESS OF TACTICAL DEFEATS HE IS UNLIKELY TO LEAVE POWER VOLUNTARILY.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ANKARA 8148

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7. THE MAIN THREAT TO CONTINUATION OF THE COALITION CONTINUE TO BE DISSENT WITHIN DEMIREL'S JUSTICE PARTY (JP). IF THE AERMACCHI CONTACT HAS BEEN SIGNED, DEMIREL MAY HAVE SOME PROBLEMS KEEPING THE GROWING DISCONTENT

WITHIN THE PARTY UNDER CONTROL -- ALTHOUGH WITH THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ONLY FIVE WEEKS AWAY, JP POLITICIANS ARE LIKELY TO BE RELUCTANT TO DISRUPT FURTHER THE ALREADY FRAGILE PARTY UNIT. IF THE CONTRACT HAS NOT BEEN SIGNED DEMIREL'S POSITION WITHIN THE JP AND THE COALITION-- AND THE COALITION ITSELF-- WILL MOST LIKELY HAVE BEEN SLIGHTLY  
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STRENGTHENED.

8. THE SPECULATION AND SENSATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE PROVOKED BY THE AERMACCHI EPISODE HAS LARGELY FOCUSED ON THE THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF THE COALITION. WE BELIEVE THAT THREAT HAS BEEN GREATLY EXAGGERATED AND THAT THE COALITION IS NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OF COLLAPSE. WE ALSO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COALITION HAS A GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAD ALREADY SHOWN SIGNS OF DETERIORATING, MAY HAVE RECEIVED ANOTHER SETBACK.

9. BECAUSE ALL THREE COALITION PARTY LEADERS WANT, FOR DIFFERENT REASONS, TO REMAIN IN POWER AT ALMOST ANY COST, THIS GROWING INCAPACITY OF THE COALITION TO GOVERN EFFECTIVELY DOES NOT NECESSARILY PRESENT AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO THE COALITION. THE WIDESPREAD DISCONTENT WITHIN THE JP IS AGGRAVATED BY THIS INCAPACITY, HOWEVER, AND DEMIREL'S ABILITY TO KEEP HIS PARTY UNITED BEHIND HIM AND IN THE COALITION IS INCREASINGLY THREATENED.

10. AS WE REPORTED IN ANKARA 7948 THE DECEMBER 11 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE THE NEXT BENCHMARK OF JP UNITY AND COALITION STABILITY. WE HAVE HEARD FROM TWO OUTSPOKEN RIVALS OF DEMIREL THAT THEY EXPECT THE JP TO SUFFER A DISASTROUS DEFEAT IN THOSE ELECTIONS, AND THEY PLAN TO USE THE OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED BY THAT DEFEAT TO INTENSIFY THEIR CHALLENGE TO DEMIREL'S LEADERSHIP. WE BELIEVE THESE PREDICTIONS OF JP ELECTORAL DISASTER ARE MORE THAN SLIGHTLY INFLUENCED BY WISHFUL THINKING. ON THE OTHER HAND, DEMIREL IS NOT INVINCIBLE. HIS PROBLEMS ARE IMMENSE AND HIS OPPONENTS INCREASINGLY CONFIDENT. AND ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT BELIEVE HIS POLITICAL COLLAPSE IS IMMINENT, AS WE POINTED OUT IN  
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ANKARA 8082, A SERIOUS JP SETBACK ON DECEMBER 11 WOULD INCREASE HIS VULNERABILITY TO EFFORTS TO OUST HIM.  
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## Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009